**Vocabulary:**

**agent** – a substance that exerts some force or effect.

**bacteria** – microscopic, single-celled organisms that lack chlorophyll and nuclei.

**epidemic** – a widespread outbreak of an infectious disease in a specified community, often beyond what is expected, within a certain time period.

**epidemiology** – the study of the frequency, distribution, and behavior of a disease within a population.

**exposure** – to come in contact with an infectious agent in a manner that promotes transmission and the likelihood of disease.

**Gram stain** – a method using dyes and clearing agents that differentiates bacteria into two groups: gram-negative and gram-positive.

**incubation period** – the time between a when a person comes in contact with a pathogen and when they first begin to show symptoms or signs of disease.

**infection** – invasion of the body by pathogenic agents.

**infectious** – able to spread from one organism to another.

**onset** – time of the appearance of the first symptoms of an illness.

**outbreak** – see epidemic

**pandemic** – a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area and affecting an exceptionally high proportion of people.

**pathogen** – a disease causing agent, such as a bacterium or virus.

**pathogenic** – disease causing.

**public health surveillance** – system of doctors and health officials collecting and comparing data on various diseases or infections within communities. Some more virulent diseases, by law, must be reported to public health officials every time they are diagnosed.

**relative risk** – ratio of the risk of disease or death among the exposed segment of the population to the risk among the unexposed.

**symptom** – evidence or sign of disease or infection.

**virulence** – a measure of how likely a pathogen is to cause disease( strength).

**virulent** – able to cause illness or disease.

**virus** – ultramicroscopic infectious agent that replicates itself only within cells of living hosts; many are pathogenic.